

CIVICS

HOLOCAUST & JEWISH IDENTITY

How did the Holocaust impact Jewish identity,
and how has Germany changed since then?

Middle
School

Holocaust & Jewish Identity: How did the Holocaust impact Jewish identity and how has Germany changed since then?

C3 Framework Indicator	D2.Civ.14.3-5.	
Staging the Compelling Question	What does it mean to remember? Why do we remember both good and bad events from history?	
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
What was the Holocaust, and how did it affect the Jewish people?	Who was Elie Wiesel, and what role did he play in remembering the Holocaust?	How has modern Germany changed since the Holocaust?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Students will research and discuss key facts about the Holocaust using age-appropriate resources	Students will explore the life of Elie Wiesel.	Students will investigate how Germany has acknowledged its role in the Holocaust and taken steps toward change.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
<u>Timeline of the Holocaust</u> <u>What was Jewish life like Before the Holocaust?</u> <u>The Life of the Jews in Germany After the Nazi Rise to Power</u>	<u>Elie Wiesel: Lie Story</u> <u>Elie Wiesel's Night</u> <u>The Perils of Indifference</u>	<u>Germany's Laws on Hate Speech, Nazi Propaganda, & Holocaust Denial: An Explainer</u> <u>How German Jews Rebuilt After the Holocaust</u> <u>Stumbling Stones in Europe</u> <u>Visiting the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin</u>
Summative Performance Task	<p>Argument: Part 1: Why is it important for both Jews and non-Jews to remember the Holocaust? Do you think Germany has done enough to reconcile with the past treatment of Jewish people during the Nazi reign?</p> <p>Part 2: Create a group presentation on how Germany has changed since the Holocaust, incorporating the importance of memorials, education, and laws against hat</p>	
	<p>Extension: At the end of the unit, students will participate in a guided reflection, where they will discuss what they have learned about history, memory, and the power of change in society. Participate in a debate arguing whether or not you think Germany has done enough to memorialize the treatment of Jewish people during the Holocaust. Students must provide evidence of either for or against.</p>	
Taking Informed Action: Using your voice to make change	<p>Understand: Students will create a class exhibit on Holocaust remembrance.</p>	
	<p>Assess: : This could include artwork, essays, or projects about Elie Wiesel, the Holocaust, and Germany's changes</p>	
	<p>Act: The exhibit could be presented to parents or the school community, allowing students to share what they have learned.</p>	

The Holocaust and Jewish Identity

Target Grade Level: 5

Target Course: Social Studies / ELA

Compelling Question

How did the Holocaust impact Jewish identity, and how has Germany changed since then?

Inquiry Overview

In this inquiry project, students will explore the treatment of Jewish people in Germany during two critical periods: the years leading up to the Nazi regime and the aftermath of World War II. By examining historical events, students will gain an understanding of the discrimination and persecution faced by Jewish communities before and during the Holocaust. A central figure in this inquiry will be Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, whose personal experiences provide a powerful lens for understanding the human impact of these atrocities. Students will study his life, writings, and reflections on the Holocaust to better understand the experiences of Jewish people during this dark chapter in history. In addition, students will examine how the German government has worked to acknowledge and atone for its past actions, focusing on post-war policies, reparations, memorials, and educational efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust. The culmination of the project will be a structured debate and a written essay, in which students will analyze and argue whether Germany has done enough to atone for its past treatment of Jewish people. Through this process, students will practice critical thinking, historical analysis, and respectful debate skills, while also engaging with important questions of justice, memory, and responsibility.

Teacher Background Information

This lesson was designed in hopes that the students would recognize that the German government has attempted to atone for its Nazi past. The students will be provided with news articles and current information about Germany's attempts at reconciliation. Hopefully, these lessons can bring a more nuanced perspective to a complicated issue. Also, I think it would be beneficial to briefly examine (at a later time) and compare/contrast how America has tried to reconcile its treatment of African Americans throughout its history because of the Civil War and the Civil Rights era.

Suggested Time Frame

4-5 class periods (45 minutes - 1 hour)

Concept List

- Holocaust;
- memorial;
- remembrance;
- reconstruction

Instructional Resources

- Breuer, Rayna. "How Does Generation Z Deal with the Holocaust?" DW, Deutsche Welle, 27 Jan. 2022, <https://www.dw.com/en/gen-z-and-the-holocaust-how-do-young-people-address-it/a-60564641>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- Breuer, Rayna. "Teaching About Nazis and the Holocaust in German Schools." DW, Deutsche Welle, 8 Nov. 2023, <https://www.dw.com/en/teaching-about-nazis-and-the-holocaust-in-german-schools/a-66526994>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- Eder, Jacob S. "Germany Is Often Praised for Facing Up to Its Nazi Past. But Even There, the Memory of the Holocaust Is Still Up for Debate." Time Magazine, 27 Jan. 2020. <https://time.com/5772360/german-holocaust-memory/>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.
- "Education." PBS Frontline, PBS, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/germans/germans/education.html>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "Education." Yad Vashem: The World Holocaust Remembrance Center, Yad Vashem, <https://www.yadavashem.org/education.html>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "Educator Resources." iWitness, USC Shoah Foundation, <https://iWitness.usc.edu/educatorresources>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "Elie Wiesel." BrainPOP Educators, BrainPOP, <https://educators.brainpop.com/bp-topic/elie-wiesel/>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "For Educators in Jewish Settings: Teaching the Holocaust and Human Behavior." Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/educators-jewish-settings-teaching-holocaust-human-behavior. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- Hasselbach, Christoph. "Holocaust Remembrance in Germany: A Changing Culture." DW, Deutsche Welle, 27 Jan. 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/holocaust-remembrance-in-germany-a-changing-culture/a-47203540>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "Home." Echoes and Reflections, Echoes and Reflections, <https://echoesandreflections.org>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "Home." Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, <https://www.hmd.org.uk>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- Keet, Einav. "What a German Taught Me About His Country and the Holocaust." Philadelphia Magazine, 27 Oct. 2022. <https://www.phillymag.com/news/2022/08/27/german-holocaust-education/>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.
- Kuta, Sarah. "Germany Turns Former Nazi Bunker into a Leisure Complex." Smithsonian Magazine, 21 Aug. 2024. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/germany-turns-former-nazi-bunker-into-a-leisure-complex-180984935/>. 24 Oct. 2024.
- "Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe." Visit Berlin, Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, <https://www.visitberlin.de/en/memorial-murdered-jews-europe>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- Miner, Samuel. "The Reconstruction of Justice in Post-Nazi Western Germany," The National World War II Museum, 11. Aug. 2021. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/justice-in-post-nazi-western-germany>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.
- Schmitz, Rob. "On Holocaust Remembrance Day, A Look at How Germany Remembers the Past." Weekend Edition Saturday, NPR, 27 Jan. 2024. <https://www.npr.org/2024/01/27/1227397156/on-holocaust-remembrance-day-a-look-at-how-germany-remembers-the-past>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.
- "Teach." United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://www.ushmm.org/teach>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "The Number on Great Grandpa's Arm." iWitness, USC Shoah Foundation, <https://iWitness.usc.edu/sites/greatgrandpasarm>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- "The Life and Work of Elie Wiesel." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, www.pbs.org/eliewiesel/life/. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.

NCSS Thematic Strands

- 2.) Time, Continuity, and Change
- 4.) Individual Development and Identity
- 5.) Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- 6.) Power, Authority, and Governance
- 9.) Global Connections

C3 Framework Indicators

- D2.Civ.14.3-5 Illustrate historical and contemporary means of changing society.

Outcomes for Student Learning

- Students will understand key events of the Holocaust and how they affected the Jewish community in Germany.
- Students will analyze the life and work of Elie Wiesel as a witness to the Holocaust.
- Students will learn about modern Germany and how it acknowledges its past while building a different future.

Germany-Related Learning Goals

- The students will be able to describe how Germany has dealt with its past in regards to the Holocaust and World War II.

Compelling Question

How did the Holocaust impact Jewish identity, and how has Germany changed since then?

Introductory Activity

Discussion Prompt:

"What does it mean to remember? Why do we remember both good and bad events from history?"

- Show students images of Holocaust memorials in Germany (e.g., the Berlin Holocaust Memorial).
- Briefly introduce Elie Wiesel as a Holocaust survivor who dedicated his life to remembering and teaching about the Holocaust.
- Quote of the Week: "The opposite of love is not hate - it is indifference." (Elie Wiesel)

Supporting Question 1

What was the Holocaust, and how did it affect the Jewish people?

Formative Performance Task 1

Students will research and discuss key facts about the Holocaust using age-appropriate resources (e.g., short video clips, pictures, timelines).

Activities:

Group discussion on the loss of Jewish life and culture during the Holocaust.

Writing assignment: Reflect on what it means to survive such an event, imagining what it might have been like for children during that time.

Writing assignment: in my classroom, we have a "Quotation of the Week" in which we reflect on the words written by important people and how we can apply it to our own lives.

This week's quote will be from Elie Wiesel: "The opposite of love is not hate - it is indifference."

» Resources

Timeline of the Holocaust. Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team, <https://timelineoftheholocaust.org>. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.

“What Was Jewish Life Like Before the Holocaust?” Virtual IWalk. IWitness, USC Shoah Foundation, <https://iwitness.usc.edu/activities/6527>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.

Yad Vashem. “The Life of the Jews in Germany After the Nazi Rise to Power.” Youtube, 27 April 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5p_F1KaCfY. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024

Supporting Question 2

Who was Elie Wiesel, and what role did he play in remembering the Holocaust?

» Formative Performance Task 2

- Students will explore the life of Elie Wiesel through reading excerpts of his biography and his Nobel Peace Prize speech. They will also look at his advocacy for remembering the Holocaust and preventing future atrocities.
- **Activities:**
 - Class reading of key excerpts from *Night* and discussion on the theme of memory.
 - Class project: Students create a timeline of Wiesel’s life, from his time as a Holocaust survivor to his Nobel Prize.

» Resources

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. Elie Wiesel: Life Story. Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, https://www.hmd.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/old-images/elie_wiesel_life_story_hmd.pdf. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Translated by Marion Wiesel, Hill and Wang, 2006.

Wiesel, Elie. "The Perils of Indifference." Nobel Prize, Nobel Media AB, 11 Dec. 1986, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1986/wiesel/lecture/> . Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.

Supporting Question 3

How has modern Germany changed since the Holocaust?

» Formative Performance Task 3

Students will investigate how Germany has acknowledged its role in the Holocaust and taken steps toward change, including the creation of memorials and laws that combat hate speech and Holocaust denial.

Activities:

Class discussion about the changes in Germany’s government and society.

Visual Project:

Students will design their own memorials to represent remembrance and hope for future generations.

Resources

Glaun, Dan. "Germany's Laws on Hate Speech, Nazi Propaganda, & Holocaust Denial: An Explainer." Frontline, PBS. 1 July 2021.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/germanys-laws-antisemitic-hate-speech-nazi-propaganda-holocaust-denial/>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.

Rozanes, Shani. "How German Jews Rebuilt After the Holocaust." DW. 21 Feb. 2021. <https://www.dw.com/en/how-jewish-life-developed-in-germany-after-the-holocaust/a-56604526>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.

Smith-Riedel, Charlene. "Stumbling Stones' in Europe: A Daughter's Journey to the Smallest of Holocaust Memorials." Folklife Magazine, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. 27 Jan. 2022. <https://folklife.si.edu/magazine/stumbling-stones-holocaust-memorials>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Chapter 7: Visiting the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin." Youtube. 24 Feb. 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5viPxWJ9bdY>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2024.

Summative Performance Task

Essay / Presentation	<p>Part 1: Write a reflective essay answering the question: Why is it important for both Jews and non-Jews to remember the Holocaust? Do you think Germany has done enough to reconcile with the past treatment of Jewish people during the Nazi reign?</p> <p>Part 2: Create a group presentation on how Germany has changed since the Holocaust, incorporating the importance of memorials, education, and laws against hate.</p>
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Taking Informed Action

Understand	The impact the Holocaust had on the Jewish people both short and long term.
Assess	What has Germany done to rectify the past and remember the victims
Act	Students will create a class exhibit on Holocaust remembrance. This could include artwork, essays, or projects about Elie Wiesel, the Holocaust, and Germany's changes. The exhibit could be presented to parents or the school community, allowing students to share what they have learned.

Modifications for Differentiation

Enrichment - Students can compare and contrast how Germany has dealt with its controversial past vs. how America has dealt with its controversial past. Remediation - for students having a hard time grasp



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